

The Importance of Caregiver Well-being

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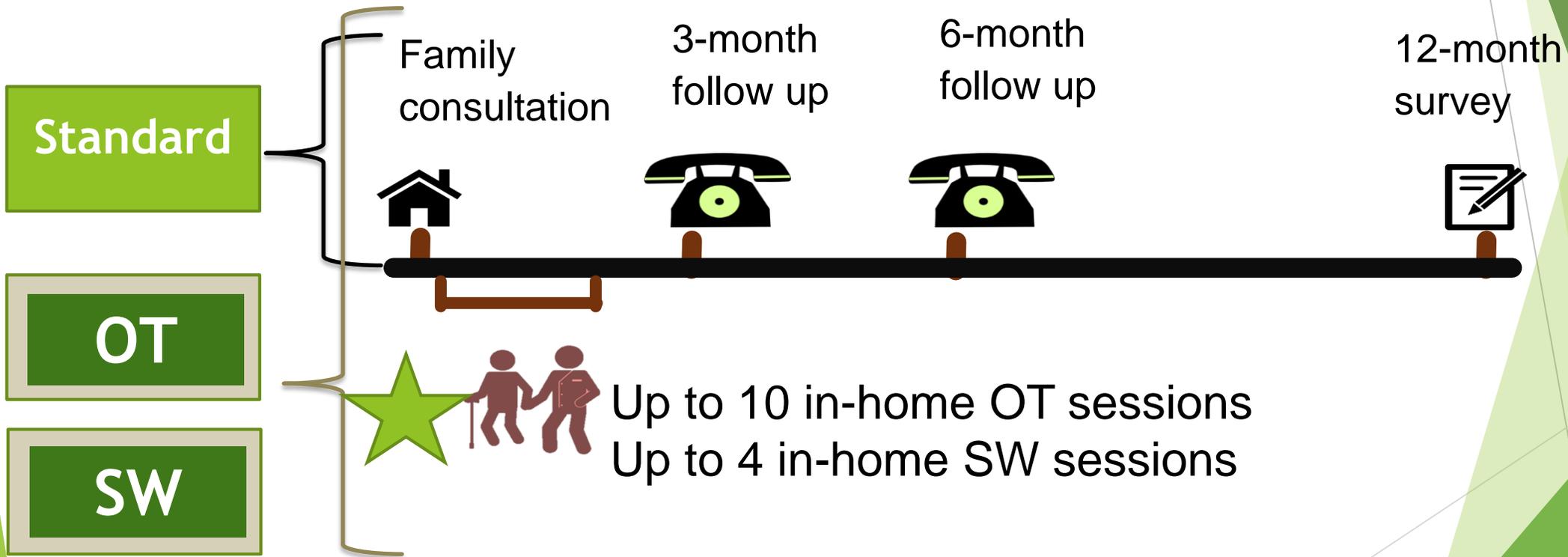
**MEMORY CARE
HOME SOLUTIONS®**



Memory Care Home Solutions

- **Community-based non-for-profit organization founded in 2002**
- **Mission:**
To extend and improve quality time at home for people living with dementia and their families

In-home Dementia Caregiver Intervention





Identify preserved strengths, roles, and routines



Home and environmental assessment



Teach a problem solving approach



About you

- ▶ Who do you care for?
- ▶ What health issues are they dealing with?

Why do people become caregivers?

Burdens of Caregiving

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Physical

- ▶ Increases risk of infection, heart disease, and immune disorders
- ▶ Can lead to
 - ▶ Gastrointestinal and eating problems
 - ▶ Sexual dysfunction
 - ▶ Sleep disturbances
 - ▶ Headaches

Cognitive

- ▶ Memory changes
- ▶ Lack of concentration
- ▶ Disorganization

Psychological

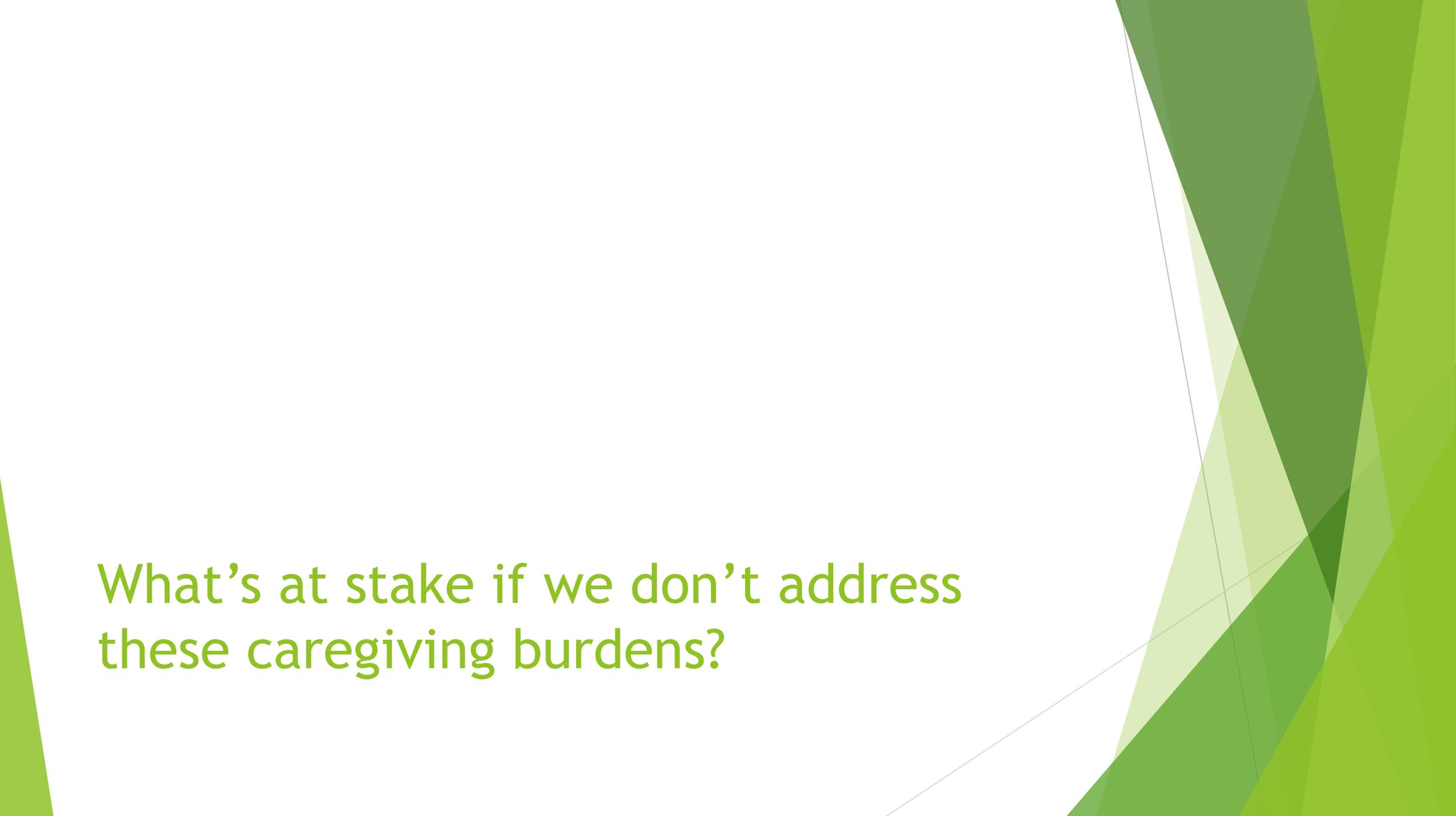
- ▶ Reduce feelings of pleasure and accomplishment
- ▶ Lead to depression or anxiety
- ▶ Contribute to feeling angry or irritable

Social

- ▶ Impact relationships with other loved ones and friends
- ▶ Feeling isolated and alone

Financial

- ▶ Contribute to missed work or early retirement
- ▶ Contribute to denied promotions or career advancements

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What's at stake if we don't address
these caregiving burdens?

Create a plan for yourself

- ▶ What are your goals as a caregiver?
- ▶ What things are important to you and the person you're caring for?
- ▶ What helps keep you well and healthy?

Information

- ▶ Information about disease symptoms and progression
- ▶ Information about helpful agencies and resources
- ▶ Practical hands-on caregiver training

Respite

- ▶ Can include
 - ▶ In-home care
 - ▶ Adult day programs
 - ▶ Short-term respite in LTCC
- ▶ Can lessen behavioral symptoms with some diseases
- ▶ Allows self-care and contributes to more meaningful times when together
- ▶ Can help with most challenging aspects of caregiving

Creating respite zones

- ▶ Identify a space in your home that you find relaxing
- ▶ Fill it with meaningful items (pictures, trinkets)
- ▶ Create a welcoming sensory experience
 - ▶ Essential oil diffuser, candles
 - ▶ Comfortable pillows, blankets
 - ▶ Soft lighting
 - ▶ Music
 - ▶ Snacks, drinks

Support

Building your team!

Medical Care

- ▶ Does YOUR doctor know you are a caregiver?
 - ▶ Tell him/her about your situation
 - ▶ Stress will complicate health problems
- ▶ Don't skip appointments for yourself (or your loved one)
- ▶ Make it easier on yourself to get care
 - ▶ If you have the same doctor as your loved one, schedule the appointment on the same day
 - ▶ Mail order medications or a delivery service

Support from family, friends, neighbors

- ▶ Consider holding regular ‘state of the union’ meetings to discuss care needs and changing status
- ▶ Prevents waiting until a crisis
- ▶ Avoids burnout by involving others
- ▶ Can create in case of emergency plans together

Peer to peer support groups

- ▶ Learn from other's experiences
- ▶ Gain meaningful connection and relationship
- ▶ Online or in-person options

Counseling

- ▶ Gain perspective from an objective party
- ▶ Develop good coping strategies
- ▶ Process trauma and grief of caregiving

Mindfulness strategies

- ▶ **Deep Breathing**-helps to relax muscles
 - ▶ Take a deep breath in for 3-4 seconds and as you exhale try to relax the muscles in your jaw, shoulders and arms. You could also say the words “relax” “peace” or “let go” while you are exhaling. Repeat 3-5 times
 - ▶ Apps for Deep Breathing
 - ▶ BellyBio Interactive Breathing app-FREE- only for iOS
 - ▶ Breathe2Relax - FREE- iOS and Android
 - ▶ Peaceful Breathing Lite- FREE- iOS and Android

▶ **Counting Exercise**

- ▶ Take a deep breath in and slowly let the air out counting from 1 to 10 or from 10 to 1.

▶ **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**-can help relieve physical tension in your body that contributes to stress

- ▶ Consult your physician if you have any pain or injuries to your joints before trying this technique
- ▶ Begin by bending your arm to your elbow to “make a muscle”, hold for 3 seconds and then relax. Continue to do this with your fist, back, and legs. Notice the contrast in feeling when your muscles are tense versus when they are relaxed.
- ▶ Apps for Progressive Muscle relaxation
 - ▶ Autogenic Training Progressive Muscle Relaxation- only for iOS and \$2.99 purchase



- ▶ **Prayer, religious readings, and spiritual reflection**

- ▶ Consider your individual beliefs and background and how that integrates into your well-being.

- ▶ **Listening to Music**

- ▶ Listening to music and playing a favorite song or type of music can help to bring you back in the moment and relax

▶ **Visual Imagery Exercise**

- ▶ Close your eyes and imagine a relaxing object, place, or activity.

- ▶ Free Guided Meditation downloads from UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center

 - ▶ <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

- ▶ FREE Apps for iOS or Android:

 - ▶ Insight Timer

 - ▶ Stop, Breathe, & Think

 - ▶ Calm

▶ **Mindfulness Meditation-** helps to focus on the present moment and refocus

- ▶ Aura App - FREE- iOS and Android

- ▶ Smiling Mind App -FREE- iOS and Android

Thank you!

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